

>> Why don't we get going.

Let's talk recreation.

One reminder for everybody, just again, just to make sure when you talk into the mic you kind of do what I'm doing right now, hold it close to your mouth.

There has been some kind of fading of your voices when you talk into the mic.

Remember, we have people online listening.

If you could just get used to the fact the mic is going to be right underneath you pointing to your mouth, that would be great.

Why don't we talk about recreation and our national conservation lands here in the State of Nevada.

We truly are blessed here in Nevada of having some wonderful recreational opportunities across the state, and I think we have a wide variety of recreational opportunities from motorized to non-motorized, which is great.

So here are some photos of just some of those activities.

Good news, in fiscal year '13 we estimated 8 million visitors to our state, we had over 400 special recreation permits issued this year, we outreached to 1400 environmental Ed interpretation programs in the state.

And we have initiatives such as America's Great Outdoors and Let's Move Outside and increasing public awareness of the importance of the outdoors.

I think we have all heard about today's society and youth being disconnected from the environment, and I think these programs and activities are an attempt to get folks -- our youth in America, into the outdoors, whether it's through careers or at least appreciation of the outdoor value we have on our public lands.

Many of you are probably aware that Secretary Jewell's high priority on engaging the youth and getting them engaged in what we do on our public lands across the Department of the Interior.

Here again we have a few photos of some of the activities we did this year.

We were very actively engaged in the Cabela's Great Outdoors Day where we reach a lot of folks coming into the store there.

We've got the California Trail Center.

Many activities there.

We had a meeting there earlier this week.

It's a great facility.

For anyone who has not visited that facility I would highly recommend the visit because they have some great information and top notch displays at that facility.

Black Rock, very popular.

More than just Burning Man.

And we have very active engagement of local partners, friends groups, in our areas.

We do have great momentum in the recreation program here in the state, and as with all of our programs, we do have flat or declining budgets.

One of the challenges is how do we continue that momentum and not lose any ground, and leverage our partnerships and I'll talk about that in a second. This is kind of one of the new things we'll be looking at trying to implement and hopefully increase partnership contributions and volunteer efforts.

You know, one of our challenges here in Nevada is that we have basically one recreation management specialist per Field Office across the state, and it's not enough, and unfortunately, we only have one -- we have "one of kinds" in our offices.

They are tapped to do a lot of other things besides what they're hired to do.

So whether it's a mining EIS, dealing with horse gather EAs, sage grouse, you name it, we need to put our recreation folks on a lot of other activities.

It stretches them from doing good things on the ground for recreation but we need that recreation input to do other programs.

That's one of the challenges we have going on.

Of course we have talked about some of the heavy workloads, whether it's horses, the sage grouse, EIS effort, Amy showed the Land Use Plans going on across the state.

That's a big time for many of our folks.

So it's just something that we are trying to balance.

So, some of the solutions.

As I mentioned, we have really great partners here.

We have the Black Rock High Rock friends group who received a national award earlier this year.

You saw the Bootstraps group get an award here in the Battle Mountain District.

We have a lot of examples of people doing wonderful things, helping the BLM out, and being recognized nationally for those efforts.

We want to continue that and applaud that effort and we want to continue to work hard to keep those relationships where they are at.

One of the things that the BLM is producing is called the recreation and visitor services -- I mean -- excuse me from the recreation and visitors services is the Connecting with Communities 2014-2019 Strategy.

The former Director challenged us to come up with new good ideas for each one of our programs. In the recreation program that was the outcome of that good idea and what it does is it recognizes our limited budgets that we have across the Bureau and provides some goals and objectives and some recommendations on how we can continue to leverage our partnerships to take them to the next level to deal with the challenging issues that we have in the program, and it's not just the recreation program.

It's really partnerships for all of our programs across the Bureau.

So I'm looking forward to seeing that document here.

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, good news there, it has been extended through December 8, 2015.

I think many of you are aware the fees we collect at our visitor centers and campgrounds go back into improving those facilities.

If we weren't getting those fees a lot of our facilities would be seriously challenged to maintain the level that they're currently at and keep up with the operation and maintenance.

So it's a very important part of our budget figure in providing those services.

So we're happy to see it was extended to 2015.

Rec RAC, for those of you who know Barb, she's a very, very appreciative lady.

I love her presentations.

We haven't had a lot of new proposals coming forward where we need to present it to the Rec RAC.

Hopefully in the near future we will, but she definitely wants to keep you guys engaged.

Our National Conservation Lands, in Nevada we have three NCAs, Black Rock, High Rock, Red Rock Canyon and Sloan Canyon.

We have 45 designated Wilderness Areas, 63 Wilderness Study Areas, three national historic trails and, of course, the California National Historic Trail interpretive center.

That makes up BLM Nevada's National Conservation Lands program.

Over here on the table, if you haven't seen a copy or want a copy, we do have the national strategy, 15-year strategy how we're going to manage our National Conservation Lands system.

So that's available here.

There's pictures of the Grand Staircase Escalante.

What each state then did, and it's also on the table here, is then develop a statewide plan of how we're going to meet the goals and objectives on the national plan in the State of Nevada.

We completed that here and with a lot of public participation from our stakeholders in that plan.

So if you don't have that, that's also on the table.

Nevada did get recognized from our national office as having one of the better plans for dealing with the NLCS.

So that's good positive feedback for us.

That's the picture of that right there on the table.

I think you guys were actively reviewed this last year as a RAC .

Our NCAs, we have annual meetings with our friends groups.

The purpose of those meetings are basically to kind of go over the strategy, give a check, see how we're doing, develop the future annual work plan as far as where we want to go with national conservation lands.

In this case you see folks at Black Rock, High Rock having a discussion out on the ground, which is a wonderful idea to talk about where we need to go.

The document is intended to be a living document, to be changing, to be very flexible.

So youth.

Big priority for the Secretary, big priority for the President.

Just makes good sense to get people out on our public lands.

Here's a couple examples where we have folks helping out with Hawk Watch International and then we have some people building duck boxes.

So these are just some of the examples of what we're doing.

This is what the Secretary is calling her strategy this year, the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps.

You will probably be hearing more about that in the future.

So we will continue to reach out to folks and hire folks and get folks to volunteer to meet our youth objectives for the year.

2014 is also a big year for two reasons.

You guys have probably seen it's Nevada's 150th birthday.

Lot of activities being planned across the state.

And it's also the Wilderness Act's 50th anniversary.

Our Nevada 150 projects.

Here are some of the things we're doing, have done.

We're creating a children's activity book.

I will show you a picture of that in a second.

The poster that Amy -- here we go right here.

We went out, got private folks to take photos of their places in Nevada that they like.

We ended up -- they donated their photos to us to create this Planner.

This is so successful because we have so many photos.

We're going to do the same thing in 2014.

So looking forward to that.

We're developing posters.

There's a whole variety of things BLM Nevada is doing to celebrate the 150th anniversary.

So this next slide kind of shows a picture of the children's activity book.

Basically they're developing a story from each of our BLM offices to put into the activity book and the children are just -- that you see here are the characters of those stories from each one of the offices.

So before I go on to the OHV -- vehicle registration program, any questions on recreation?

That was pretty easy.

I guess it wasn't as stimulating as horses or something, huh?

All right.

Let's talk about the off-highway vehicle program.

I think most of you are familiar about this committee, statewide committee.

Got 11 voting members appointed by the Governor.

Here is the folks -- the 11 voting members, the representation.

You will see that BLM is one of the nine nonvoting members as part of this commission.

Is anyone here on the RAC on the commission?

Was there somebody in the past on it?

>> [inaudible] that.

>> Okay.

Good deal.

You can help me out if there are any changes I haven't got right up here.

Next slide.

As you know, OHVs have been required to be registered since July 2012.

Nevada state parks estimate there are 425,000 off highway vehicles in the state.

As of November 2013 we've had 33,000 registrations, probably no real surprise there.

It does cost a little money to register.

But this is the money that's going to be used to do some of the good things that this program is designed to do.

So the funds -- so from the registrations, the money they get, 15% of the fund was to go to the DMV office for the registration and the collection of the fees.

The remaining 85% was divided in the following four categories there, 60% for trails, 20% for law enforcement, 15% for public education and 5% for administration.

This is the area that BLM is going to play in.

It's going to be in the trails area.

Funding for the trails will go to studying and planning for trails and facilities, the NEPA required for that, mapping and signing of trails, the acquisition of land for trails, the enhancement and maintenance

of trails, construction of trails and restoration of areas damaged by OHVs and says here no more than 30% of the funds can go to any one of these six categories.

This is the area that BLM can participate on public lands as far as securing some funds with the state and doing good things for the trail systems out there on public lands.

Law enforcement.

Those are administered by the Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and there are no plans to fund BLM law enforcement at this time from this account.

However, while BLM cannot enforce in Nevada state laws, we do have a Federal law that allows us, and that's the 43 CFR 8341.1 which allows us to enforce OHV registration on public lands.

So we're not enforcing state law.

So the question comes up, this is a state law, you have no jurisdiction, we have a Federal jurisdiction law that allows us to implement -- not so much implement but basically give tickets for folks who are not registering their vehicles.

And the money from those tickets does not come back to BLM but goes back to the U.S. Treasury.

So grant program, that deadline just passed.

They're filing the first round January 15th.

I know there was a meeting last Friday where they went over the grants.

I wasn't able to attend.

I'm not sure what the outcome was of the grants but we did support a few projects on there.

Apparently -- approximately \$250,000 was available for trail projects.

The grants will be awarded on March 15th and our offices continue to work with our local partners and governments to come up with some great ideas for the use of these funds to do good things for trails and off-highway vehicle management.

Any questions on that really, this program is really just getting going.

It's just up, running.

>> David Von Seggern, Raul, we heard earlier there's 25,000 horses on Nevada HMAs.

Now there's a figure of 430,000 OHVs out there.

Does the BLM or anybody have a handle on what proportion of damage to resources is done by OHVs versus overgrazing by horses?

>> What proportion -- I don't know if we have a proportion.

>> Do you have any handle whatsoever on what the damage to our resources on public lands are by OHVs versus the overpopulation of horses?

>> Oh -- close -- get a little closer to the mic.

Sorry.

The question was, does BLM have a handle on the amount of destruction by OHV use as compared to overgrazing by horses, or both.

Is that fair?

>> Yeah.

I don't know if we can say we've got "X" number of miles of trails that are in bad shape or anything like that.

We do know where we have areas on a case-by-case basis.

I don't know that we can say at this point that we know we have a whole bunch of trails, X miles of trails, that are in tough shape.

Unless any of the BLM offices -- anyone have any better information?

Doug?

>> I think anybody that spends any time out on the public lands in Nevada anyway clearly sees that there's a lot of unmanaged OHV use occurring out there, and I think that -- to answer that question there's probably no measurable amount of damage that we can document, but one of the things that most of us are doing is addressing it through our Land Use Plan to designate areas limited to existing roads and trails.

So I think that from perspective I think BLM through the Land Use Planning Process is clearly trying to get a handle on OHV use so it's properly managed.

>> I know our Elko office is in the process of starting to do trail inventory and as they do those inventories they will be in a better position to see where there's disturbance.

But they're in the first year of doing that.

>> I meant on the comparison, a mustang or a wild burro is a mustang or wild burro 24/7 and of those 430,000 OHVs in Nevada are a lot are past vintage and if they get out of the garage at all it's pretty much an improbability, but on the ones that do get out -- in other words, the 430,000 is just -- I think it's a miscomparison because they're not on the trails or out in public lands 24/7, and we're really

looking at a much smaller amount that are new and in good shape and so used on a regular basis, and that regular basis is probably simply on weekends.

Nevada is much behind the rest of the states in the west as far as trail management and trail planning, and as we get our travel management plans in place, we're going to see far less detrimental impact by OHV recreation and competition.

But it's a process that takes time.

But we're more than halfway through it.

In most areas that OHV travel is already limited to existing roads, trails and dry washes, that in many areas, Carson district, Southern Nevada District, there's inventories that have been completed and will be presented as part of the RMP revisions, and with those inventory trails that it's no longer simply going to be existing roads and trails but, in other words, those in the inventory to prevent proliferation of trails.

It's a process that's in the works right now, but it's -- there's going to be a -- an OHV -- in other words, there's going to be a travel management plan in place here probably in the next five years.

>> Yeah, and I want to put a plug on travel management.

This is another area where folks need to be actively engaged as we do this, because we do know we have some problem spots, but until we actually come up with a plan that says, hey, reroute this, close this, this is a sustainable trail -- it's tough for the public when they go throughout to figure out where they go.

They kind of follow the trails and they kind of follow the latest track that's made to avoid bad areas and it sometimes perpetuates it.

But like I said, we're in the process of doing proactive travel management and Nevada is one of the states that's behind compared to other states but we're getting that.

Appreciate that.

Put a plug at the local office when we do travel management.

>> Just a quick comment on next year's grant, I would urge all the district offices and Field Offices to get with your partners and come up with a strategy now and talk about what in-kind donations the BLM could give.

I mean, you know, a partner group could get money for outdoor education and pay to put a person on an OHV, you know, but they always ask for in-kind donations, if the BLM could possibly, you know, donate the OHV to the program or a truck or something like that.

Obviously the person would have to go through the proper safety things, but let's start thinking about it now and not wait until the last minute because there's a lot of money there, and it could really go to use on our public lands.

>> Good plug.

>> Plan early for that.

>> Good plug for getting engaged.

Appreciate that.

>> Raul, I see a lot of Californians coming over to western Nevada and riding.

Does the registration process any way document or account for those riders coming from California?

>> Well, I don't think the -- registration process is just for Nevada licensed vehicles.

California vehicles are probably licensed, I'm going to guess -- California seems like a state that's pretty well licensed.

>> [inaudible]

>> Okay.

Yeah, so --

>> It came up in subcommittee last week -- or actually two weeks ago, are there any studies of the impact on habitat from the snowmobiles?

>> Park Service I can only guess would have a good idea on that because of Yellowstone National Park and probably Glacier National Park where they do have a lot of snowmobile activities in the park.

So I would say yes, but I don't have those.

I'm sure they exist.

>> Okay.

>> Anything else?

You guys are kind to me once again.

I appreciate that.

So, I'll be around.

Any other questions on anything, please feel free to come and talk.

All right.

We're running a little bit ahead of schedule.

This was supposed to go until about 11:30.

So we can -- the -- a couple options.

We can open up it up for general questions on the presentations this morning.

Or we can release you earlier for lunch and have you back here at 1:00 instead.

>> Let's do [inaudible]

>> All right.

So you're released for lunch.

Please be back at 1:00.

Thank you.